La Crosse

Wind Symphony

Presents

# *Honoring Our Veterans*

*With Guest Soloist Matthew Yee*

*Jeff C. Krauklis, Conductor*

and featuring the

***Roy L. Vingers American Legion Post 52 Color Guard***

Sunday, November 8, 2026
3:00 PM

Weber Center For The Performing Arts
La Crosse, Wisconsin

*free admission*

*A VETERAN, whether active duty, discharged, retired or reserve, is someone who, at one point in their life, wrote a blank check payable to: The United States of America, for the amount up to and including his or her life.*

## *P R O G R A M*

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**LET FREEDOM RING** — Ryan Nowlin (1978- )

**FANTASY VARIATIONS** — Yasuhide Ito (1960- )

Musician 1st Class Matthew Yee, USCG Band - *euphonium soloist*

**AMERICAN SALUTE** — Morton Gould (1913-1996)
*Transcribed by Philip J. Lang*

**FIRST SUITE IN E-FLAT FOR MILITARY BAND** — Gustav Holst (1874-1934)

1. Chaconne
2. Intermezzo
3. March

*I n t e r m i s s i o n* (10 minutes)

**ESPRIT DE CORPS** — Robert Jager (1939- )

**BULLETS AND BAYONETS (March)** — John Philip Sousa (1854-1932)
*Edited by Frederick Fennell*

**ETERNAL FATHER, STRONG TO SAVE** — Claude T. Smith (1932-1987)

# La Crosse Wind Symphony Personnel

*(listed alphabetically by section)*

**PICCOLO/FLUTE**
Stephanie Brookman

**FLUTE**
Mona Gardner *
Pamela Helgerson-Dome
Rita Koch-Thometz
Nancy Pilmonas
Nancy Von Arx

**OBOE**
Carrie Cunningham
Janene Leeper

**BASSOON**
Elizabeth Bahr
Bree Keister

**BASSOON/ CONTRABASSOON**
Jeffrey Copp

**CLARINET**
Mary Andersen
Mikayla Bohner
Michael Chesher
Charles Craig
Harry Hindson *
Angela Klinkner
Katie Larson
Amelia Meiners
Jennifer Warthan

**BASS CLARINET**
Jacob Erickson

**SOPRANO SAXOPHONE**
Kate Haller Ailabouni

**ALTO SAXOPHONE**
Kate Haller Ailabouni
Olivia Salzman-Coon

**TENOR SAXOPHONE**
McKenna Sherrod

**BARITONE SAXOPHONE**
Andrew Jones

**TRUMPET**
Josh Beron
Jaime Greenfield
Sara Hallberg
Jacob Hinman
Scott Jensen
Eric Larson
Grant Meier
Bix Swerman

**HORN**
Tammy Bartz
Bonny Fish
Thomas Hunt
Jodi Monerson
Vickie Rortvedt

**TROMBONE**
Michelle Jensen
Tom Jensen
George Von Arx

**BASS TROMBONE**
Rachel O'Donnell

**EUPHONIUM**
Alex Mix
Maddie Rainey

**TUBA**
Scott Bradford
Geoff O'Donnell

**STRING BASS**
Leo Chavolla

**PERCUSSION**
Corbin Haar
Jim Knutson
Greg Smith
Adelaide Woodward
Gary Yee
Brittany Zold *

* Denotes band members who have served in the military.

## Future Performances

Sunday, January 31, 2027 - 3:00 pm
Sunday, April 11, 2027 - 3:00 pm

***Trygve Mathison Fine Arts Center at Holmen High School***

# *Program Notes*

Ryan Nowlin (b. 1978, Parma, Ohio) is an American composer, arranger and conductor. He holds both a B.M. in music education and an M.M. in music education and conducting from Bowling Green State University. Nowlin taught instrumental music at the high school level in Ohio for ten years before joining “The President’s Own” United States Marine Band in August 2010 as staff arranger. Rising through the ranks, on Dec. 20, 2023, Lt. Col. Nowlin became the 29th Director of "The President's Own" United States Marine Band.

Before *The Star-Spangled Banner* officially became the national anthem in 1931, there were many popular hymns that served as de facto anthems for the United States, including *My Country ‘tis of Thee.* The lyrics of this patriotic American song were written by Samuel F. Smith and set to the melody of *God Save the Queen,* the anthem of the United Kingdom. ***Let Freedom Ring,*** an arrangement of *My Country ‘tis of Thee,* was composed in 2012 and premiered by the Marine Band on January 21, 2013, at the second inaugural of President Barack Obama.

Drawing his inspiration for this piece directly from Smith’s patriotic words, Nowlin says his “simplistic treatment of the theme is to portray a deep reverence.” Shining through the texture on numerous occasions, great emphasis is placed on the lyrics, “land where my fathers died,” a strong reminder that America would not be what it is were it not for the sacrifices of those who have gone before us. As Nowlin adds: *“* I had three grandfathers who served in the Second World War. They were lucky enough to return -- I've never taken that for granted, and could not be more proud of their service.”

*** * ***

Japanese composer and educator, Yasuhide Ito (7 December 1960, Hamamatsu City, Shizuoka Prefecture, Japan) began studying piano as a child, and completed graduate work at Tokyo University of Fine Arts and Music in 1986 where he studied composition with Professor Teruyuki Noda. Ito has composed more than 1000 works, more than 90 for wind band and his *Gloriosa* is one of the most frequently performed masterworks in the world. His lectures about Japanese band music at WASBE in 1995 (Hamamatsu) and 1997 (Austria) have had a great influence on the band world. He is a member of the Japanese Society for Contemporary Music and the JBA. Professor Ito teaches at Tokyo University of Fine Arts and Music, Sakuyo Music College and Tokyo Conservatoire Shobi.

Originally written for solo euphonium with piano accompaniment, ***Fantasy Variations for Euphonium*** was commissioned by Toru Miura, who premiered the work on 11 August 1990. Ito later arranged the accompaniment for wind band. The piece is based on an Ainu love song called *Yaisamanina*. However, the original form of the melody hardly appears, nor is it music in Ainu style. The variations are rather unusual in that each variation is in a single musical form. The first variation is a *chaconne*, the second is a *rondo*, followed by the theme (*aria*), and the third is a *fugue*.

“Mr. Miura asked me to write a piece that was "pop, light mood, not demanding, effective, and accessible...". I did my best to write a pop piece. However, I was surprised when I read the letter again later. He actually wrote, "*neither* pop nor light mood…”

*** * ***

Pulitzer Prize and Grammy-winning musician Morton Gould (10 December 1913, Richmond Hill, New York - 21 February 1996, Orlando, Florida) was an American pianist, composer, conductor, and arranger. He was recognized early as a child prodigy with abilities in improvisation and composition and he had his first work published at age six. Starting during the Depression, Gould, while still a teenager, worked in New York City playing piano in movie theaters, as well as with vaudeville acts. In a career spanning over 70 years, Gould developed a reputation for

incorporating new styles into his repertoire as they emerged, frequently incorporating wildly disparate elements. Often semiserious in nature, Morton Gould's music is unique in its Americanism and in the seemingly endless wealth of creativity displayed by the composer. He was president of ASCAP from 1986 until 1994, the same year he received the Kennedy Center Honor in recognition of lifetime contributions to American culture.

Originally composed for orchestra, ***American Salute*** has become a favorite of the concert band repertoire. Using the familiar tune *When Johnny Comes Marching Home* (written during the Civil War by Patrick Gilmore) as the sole melodic resource, Morton Gould demonstrates his skill in thematic development, creating a brilliant fantasy on a single tune.

Written in 1942 in the early days of World War II, it was composed at the request of a government radio program producer who wanted a "salute to America." The composer insisted that he had no idea that the work was destined to become a classic: "It was years before I knew it was a classic setting. What amazes me is that critics say it is a minor masterpiece, a gem. To me, it was just a setting. I was doing a million of those things." A million may be an exaggeration, but not by much. The pace of Gould's schedule in those days was astounding. By his own account he composed and scored *American Salute* in less than eight hours, starting at 6 p.m. the evening before it was due (with copyists standing by), and finishing at 2 a.m. Although the ink couldn't have been dry, the score and parts were on the stand in time for rehearsal the next morning and ready for broadcast that evening.

* * *

Gustav Holst (21 September 1874, Gloucestershire, U.K. – 25 May 1934, London) was a greatly admired British composer and educator. He learned piano at an early age, but was stricken with a nerve condition that affected the movement of his right hand, forcing him to give up the piano for the trombone. He received his degrees from The Royal College of Music in London, where he met fellow composer (and lifelong friend) Ralph Vaughan Williams. In 1905, Holst became director of music at the St Paul's Girls' School in Hammersmith, London, and in 1907, he also became director of music at Morley College, retaining both positions until his death in 1934.

Holst's compositions for wind band, although only a small portion of his total output, have made him a cornerstone of the genre. He will always be revered in the band world for being the first respected composer to accept the challenge of creating an original, mature work for the wind band - in fact, the first masterwork for the medium. Bands at that time were seen as less-refined and inferior to the symphony orchestra, relegated to playing marches and transcriptions of popular orchestral standards.

Although completed in 1909, Holst's ***First Suite in E-flat for Military Band*** didn't receive its official premiere until 11 years later on 23 June 1920, by an ensemble of 165 musicians at the Royal Military School of Music at Kneller Hall. The title was intentional so as to leaving no doubt that this was indeed an *origina*l work for band. During this time period there was no standardized instrumentation among the hundreds of British military bands of the day, and as a result no significant literature had been previously written for the medium. In order to ensure the suite would be accessible to as many bands as possible, Holst ingeniously scored the opus so that it could be played by a minimum of 19 musicians, with 16 additional parts that could be added or removed without compromising the integrity of the work. Occupying a legendary position today in the wind band repertoire, its influence is so significant that countless composers have made quotation or allusion to it as a source of inspiration to their own works.

* * *

Robert Jager (25 August 1939, Binghamton, New York) is an American composer, conductor, arranger and educator. He studied at the University of Michigan with William Revelli and Elizabeth Green before joining the U.S. Navy, where for four years he served as the Staff Arranger at the Armed Forces School of Music. Jager taught at Old Dominion University and Tennessee Tech

University, where he was Professor of Music and Director of Theory and Composition. He retired from Tennessee Tech in May 2001 as professor emeritus.

Jager has over 150 published compositions for band, orchestra and various chamber groupings, with more than 35 commissions including the United States Marine Band and the Tokyo Kosei Wind Orchestra. He has won a number of awards for his music and is the only three-time winner of the American Bandmasters Association's Ostwald Award.

Based on *The Marines' Hymn,* ***Esprit de Corps*** is a kind of fantasy-march, as well as a tribute to the United States Marine Band, the group which commissioned the work in 1984. Full of energy and drama, the composer intends that this work should display the fervor and virtuosity of the Marine Band and the musical spirit and integrity of its (then) conductor, Colonel John R. Bourgeois, for whom the initial tempo marking, "Tempo di Bourgeois," is named. Colonel John Bourgeois is a dramatic, spirited conductor who reflects the excitement of the music being played. When a tempo is supposed to be "bright" he makes sure it is exactly that. Because the tempo of *Esprit de Corps* is to be very bright, the marking just had to be "Tempo di Bourgeois!"

* * *

John Philip Sousa (6 November 1854, Washington, D.C. – 6 March 1932, Reading, Pennsylvania) was America's best known composer and conductor during his lifetime. Highly regarded for his military band marches, Sousa is often called the "The March King" or "American March King". His father played trombone in the U.S. Marine Band, so young John grew up around military band music. When Sousa reached the age of 13, his father enlisted him as as an apprentice of the United States Marine Corps. Sousa served his apprenticeship for seven years, until 1875, and apparently learned to play all the wind instruments while also continuing with the violin. He returned to the U.S. Marine Band as its head in 1880 and remained as its conductor until 1892, establishing it as the premiere service band in the nation - the "President's Own". After leaving the service, he organized his own band and the Sousa Band toured from 1892-1931, performing 15,623 concerts in America and abroad.

During the years of WWI, Sousa returned to military service with the U.S. Navy, serving as bandmaster at the Great Lakes Naval Station from 1917 to 1919. One of his best war-time marches from this period was ***Bullets and Bayonets***. It is held by a legion of aficionados to be one of the best in Sousa's legendary output; many believe it to be his best. (Of course, that is a distinction usually attributed to half of his marches, if not more.) Sousa was 64 when he wrote the march in 1918. It is thoughtfully composed, with flashes back to the charming style of his marches from the mid-1880s. The scoring is fresh, imaginative, and has a distinctly military character. The title and its dedication "to the officers and men of the US infantry" is no surprise. That it happens to be a really great march is of no surprise, either.

* * *

American composer, conductor, and educator Claude Thomas Smith (14 March 1932, Monroe City, Missouri – 13 December 1987, Kansas City, Missouri) started his musical career playing trumpet in the fifth grade. He attended Central Methodist College, Fayette, Missouri, until he was drafted into the Army during the Korean Conflict. Unable to find a position with the service bands as a trumpeter, he auditioned on the french horn and won a position with the 371st Army Band. He finished his undergraduate training at the University of Kansas. Smith wrote over 180 works for band, orchestra, choir, solos, and small ensembles and received numerous prestigious commissions, including works for the U.S. Air Force Band, the "President's Own" U.S. Marine Band, the U.S. Navy Band, and the U.S. Army Field Band. His composition *Flight* was adapted as the official march of the National Air and Space Museum of the Smithsonian Institute. Smith taught instrumental music in the public schools of Nebraska and Missouri and later served as a

member of the faculty of Southwest Missouri State University in Springfield where he taught composition and theory, and conducted the University Symphony Orchestra.

In 1975, the US Navy Band was celebrating its 50th Anniversary when Smith was approached to possibly compose a piece for the occasion. He said, “Most definitely” and the resulting work was his setting of ***Eternal Father, Strong to Save***. It was premiered at the Band's 50th anniversary concert held at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C., on March 4, 1975. Rich in harmony, dynamics, and thematic interplay, the work captures the essence of the missionary hymn of the same name composed in 1860 by John Bacchus Dykes (1823-1876), which was adopted as the official hymn of the U.S. Navy and is the final selection played as Navy veterans are laid to rest. Smith’s incredible composition captures the essence of this significant hymn. From the grandeur of the opening fanfare, to the fugal introduction of the theme. To the final revelation of the chorale in its reverent glory. The composition is as relevant today as the day it was premiered.

*Eternal Father, strong to save,*
*Whose arm does bind the restless wave,*
*Who bids the mighty ocean deep*
*Its own appointed limits keep;*
*O hear us when we cry to Thee*
*For those in peril on the sea.*

## Matthew Yee

### *Soloist*



Musician 1st Class Matthew Yee, euphonium, is originally from Auburn, California. Prior to joining the U.S. Coast Guard Band in May 2024, he earned bachelor's degrees in both music and civil engineering from Valparaiso University in Indiana. During his first two years in the band, MU1 Yee has performed in 16 states while on tour, the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo in Scotland, and the Marshall Islands. In February 2025, he was a featured soloist on the band's West Coast Tour through California, Oregon, and Washington. This past summer, MU1 Yee performed in Norfolk, Washington DC, and New York City in support of America 250 festivities. In September, on a hemisphere-spanning tour of several Pacific Island nations, Matthew performed in the chamber group Pacific Winds on an annual outreach mission dubbed “Operation Blue Pacific.” Over a two week period, they performed countless shows for students, diplomats, dignitaries, service members, and citizens of Palau, Yap, Guam, Tonga, and Fiji. They traveled halfway across the world to fulfill two of the Band’s most important jobs: providing free, high quality music education and promoting understanding of all the ways that the U.S. Coast Guard protects communities at home and abroad.

Yee's instructors have included Richard Watson, Steph Frye-Clark, Julian Dixon, Kevin Dombrowski, and John Grodrian. Outside of the band, MU1 Yee works part time for McAlpine Consulting LLC, a civil engineering and land development firm in Northwest Indiana. He is an avid baseball fan and enjoys traveling,

**JEFF C. KRAUKLIS** retired as a band director in 2019 after a thirty-five year teaching career, the final twenty-eight years in the Holmen Schools. He received his Bachelor of Music Degree in Music Education from the University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point, studying conducting with Donald E. Greene and his Master of Music Degree in Wind Conducting from Northwestern University, where he was a student of John P. Paynter. Prior to Holmen, he held high school teaching positions in Galesville, Wisconsin, and Menominee, Michigan. Krauklis has served as an adjunct faculty member at UW-La Crosse, where he directed the Symphonic Band; Winona State University, where he led the Wind Ensemble; and Viterbo University, where he instructs Instrumental Techniques and Music Appreciation. He was in the conducting rotation of the La Crosse Concert Band for over twenty years and was a long-time section leader, board member and officer on the Executive Committee.

An active composer, Krauklis has arranged or composed over 200 works for band, orchestra, jazz band, marching band, chorus and show choir. An avid performer and brass teacher, he maintains an active trumpet studio and performs frequently in the greater La Crosse area as a soloist, in brass quintets, and in various classical and jazz ensembles. Krauklis has served as trumpet coach for the Wisconsin School Music Association (WSMA) Middle Level State Honors Band and on the state board of directors for the Wisconsin chapter of the National Band Association (now the Wisconsin Concert Band Association). He was also a long-time adjudicator and clinician with WSMA.

## THANK YOU!

***We could not have staged a performance of this magnitude without the generous help and assistance of many people. A very special "Thank You" to the following for their invaluable contribution of time and resources:***

*Andrew Jones and Angela Klinkner, Holmen H.S. Band Staff*
*Mary Cate Wesling - Artistic Director, La Crosse Community Theater*
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*Scott Jensen, Concert Recording*
*Rachel O'Donnell, MS Low Brass Clinic*
*La Crosse Neighborhoods Inc. (LCNI)*
*Members of the La Crosse Wind Symphony and their Families*

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